



Restore Columbus Coalition

Training a powerful base of community and organizational leaders to **reconstruct** policies and laws that **restore** equitable access to systems and opportunity **for all** Ohioans.

About Us

We are a grassroots coalition of community and civic leaders committed to restoring Columbus for all residents by **resolving conflict + eliminating systemic harm in schools, courts, and communities** using proven and effective restorative approaches over punitive responses. Our grassroots team emerged in 2016 after years of advocating for laws and policies that center the voices and experiences of youth, young voters, and families directly-affected by zero-tolerance culture in our schools, courts, and communities. In May 2017, we embarked on a journey to organize, educate, and train collaborative partners in order to expand our capacity. In doing so, we began working to create new policies and were able to advocate for and pass restorative legislation created to repair relations between communities and the organizations and systems that serve them.

Commit to Action- Journey to Leadership

Every leader has a sphere of influence. We believe in stewarding grassroots and organizational leaders on their journey to transition their school, court, or community environment from punitive to restorative. Our Leadership Development tracks below support existing opportunities for leaders to engage in restoring Ohio for all.

- **Political Organizing: Testimony, Research, and Restorative Community Reinvestment**
 - Research and monitor current, pending, or imminent institutional or organizational policy and state legislation proven to adversely impact communities.
 - Weigh in on current institutional/organizational policy and state legislation proven to adversely impact communities.
 - Advocate for restorative institutional/organizational policy and state legislation through in-person or written testimony (e.g. bill hearing, Letter to the Editor), and organizing (re)investment into our alliance and its efforts.
- **Electoral Organizing: Voter Engagement and Mobilization**
 - Team up with an existing organizing group or development track within the alliance to expand our base of community members, leaders, and system champions committed to supporting or leading in RestoreCBUS as an organizer, advocate, researcher, or credible messenger, while we work to shift schools, courts, and communities from punitive to restorative.
 - Join our Training Team to co-facilitate or lead one of our RestoreCBUS restorative practices and restorative circle trainings.
- **Cultural Organizing: Building Community through Art, Culture, and Creativity**
 - The main tenet of restorative practices is relationship-building and trust. Help us deepen our internal community relationship with organizations and systems through the universal connectors of art and culture. Host a RestoreCBUS community gathering or organize for a community event.
- **Organizing Self: Restorative Leadership**
 - This work takes work: internal, self-focused work and collective work. Help us maintain our integrity by upholding the rigor of restorative embodiment through self and community care. This development track may entail facilitation of restorative practices for our members.
 - Training is one thing. Practice is another. Support this track through facilitation of community or system circles that work to restore relationships and reduce harm after conflict.
 - Refer and provide needs-based advocacy, services, or legal support to young people, families, and workers on their path to power through civic leadership within our alliance.





Restore Columbus collaborates with and is supported by many organizational and community affiliates. [The Juvenile Justice Coalition \(JJC\)](#) is the Lead Organizational Sponsor for our initiative. Since October 2015, JJC has invested in the cultivation of **Voices of the Unheard**, a civic leadership greenhouse for young people and families directly-affected by unaddressed trauma, school pushout, juvenile court and incarceration. Our intergenerational community-system organizing projects and initiatives are holistically designed to 1] **prevent** recidivism at its root, 2] **Work to change** and **restore** harmful policies and laws 3] to **innovate** community-led alternatives that honor the life experiences of the whole family, reduce harm, restore dignity, and redirect young people onto a path of success. Together we bridge our cross-class, multiracial, all-gender-inclusive coalition by building and moving in our commitment to achieving healthy, equitable, and prosperous communities for all Ohioans.

Partnered & Affiliated Organizations

[Voices of the Unheard \(VOU\)](#) is an intergenerational Civic Leadership Greenhouse cultivated by youth, young adults up to age 24, and their families who have been directly-affected by trauma, exclusionary school discipline, juvenile court and incarceration. VOU is holistically designed as a prevention, intervention, and innovation incubator to transform pain into purpose and passion into power through four main Leadership Development Tracks and Pathways: Policy Advocacy and Research, Voter Engagement and Mobilization, Community Building Through Art Expression and Cultural Celebration, Restorative Embodiment and Self-Determination Support.

[Ohio Education Association \(OEA\)](#) represents more than 124,000 teachers, faculty members and support professionals who work in Ohio's schools, colleges and universities to help improve public education and the lives of Ohio's children. OEA members provide a wide range of professional education services in communities throughout the state. Our members teach in kindergarten classrooms, high school labs and university halls. They counsel adolescents and help students carve out career aspirations. We coach athletes and transport students to and from the schools and extra-curricular events. We provide professional services to benefit students, schools and the public in virtually every position needed to run Ohio's schools.

[People's Justice Project \(PJP\)](#) PJP organizes working people and people of color to lead the fight for safe, healthy, and equitable lives for all by fighting against mass incarceration. Our vision is a transformation in the criminal justice system from the criminalization and incarceration of individuals, particularly young people and people of color, to policies that support healing and growth for individuals, families, and communities. PJP aims to build independent political power through civic engagement/voting, direct action, and creative collaboration.

Our Restorative Framework: Philosophies & Resources

Restore Columbus uses the definitions and frameworks from the International Institute for Restorative Practices (IIRP) and training modules crafted in-state by Peace Justice & Equality (PJE) - a partnership with the University of Akron Center for Family Studies and Summit County Courts:

"The IIRP distinguishes between the terms restorative practices and restorative justice. We view restorative justice as a subset of restorative practices. Restorative justice is reactive, consisting of formal or informal responses to crime and other wrongdoing after it occurs. The IIRP's definition of restorative practices also includes the use of informal and formal processes that precede wrongdoing, those that proactively build relationships and a sense of community to prevent conflict and wrongdoing.

Where social capital—a network of relationships—is already well established, it is easier to respond effectively to wrongdoing and restore social order—as well as to create a healthy and positive organizational environment. Social capital is defined as the connections among individuals (Putnam, 2001), and the trust, mutual understanding, shared values and behaviors that bind us together and make cooperative action possible (Cohen & Prusak, 2001)."

Next Steps

Get Connected! Contact Elizabeth Speidel for more information: restorecbus@gmail.com

RestoreCBUS is a community-centered, non-partisan, intergenerational initiative led by young people and caring adults including educators, direct service providers, faith, civic, and elected leaders committed to transforming Central Ohio systems and communities from punitive environments to restorative environments. Our alliance is intentionally stewarded by diverse voters and taxpayers varying in race, class, gender, culture, and sexual orientation.

